10081

THE KIRKIAD;

OR,

GOLDEN AGE

OF THE

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

CANTO I.

Non ego ſum Vates, ſed priſci conſcius ævi.
——Seria mixta jocis.

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PREFACE.

THE writer of this has no intention to leſſen the influence, or detract from the reſpect and veneration which is due to men in a ſacred character. Nothing could be more culpable and unſeaſonable than ſuch a deſign, at a period when they themſelves have been ſufficiently ſucceſsful in producing this effect. He thinks there is not a character on earth more reſpectable and uſeful than a Divine, when he acts in a manner becoming his office; nor one leſs ſo, when it is otherwiſe. He will be ſorry if he has ſaid any thing *licentia poetica*, that will give any good man offence; or if the freedoms here uſed with the faults and ridiculous foibles of *modern clergymen*, or thoſe aſpiring to that character, ſhall be conſtructed as a reproach upon the office. Nothing could be farther from his thoughts. This is the common-place topic of the licentious wits of the age—graceleſs Libertines, and abandoned Free-thinkers; and to ſuch he is willing to leave it, being the utmoſt height to which their grovelling ſpirits can riſe for fame, and which furniſhes them with their only title to applauſe.

Nor is he ſo cynical as to explode fine taſte and good-breeding, much leſs to diſparage the intereſts of true learning, when theſe terms are juſtly underſtood. But what is ſo innocent or good that may not be abuſed? Things may have a certain proportion of value, and yet be unduly eſtimated; and have ſuch a degree of importance aſſigned to them in the opinion of mankind, as cannot fail to be accompanied with abſurd or criminal conduct in life.

Eſt modus in rebus, ſunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit conſiſtere rectum.

Nor yet would he chuſe to paſs in the opinion of his readers for an enemy to the *Church of Scotland.* So far from this, he believes that, of all the reformed churches, ſhe has, in many reſpects, the preference; and may be juſtly propoſed to all others as a pattern for imitation in primitive purity and excellence; as far, perhaps, as any human conſtitution can be. He ſpeaks of what ſhe once was, not what ſhe now is.

As for the kind of writing here uſed, he ſhall not offer any long apology: Every man to his mind. But where can we meet with a more ſharp and piercing Irony than that uſed by a

prophet

prophet of the Lord, on a very ſerious and mournful occaſion? And ſurely thoſe who pique themſelves ſo much on their fine modern taſte, will not venture to condemn wit and humour, or their offspring, ſatire, as profane. Theſe may certainly be made ſubſervient to good purpoſes, as well as bad. And pity it is, that they ſhould have been ſo long, and ſo often proſtituted to feed and gratify the corrupt, vitiated diſpoſition of the times; and ſo freely played off, with impunity, againſt truth, piety, and godlineſs, under the impoſed names of cant, hypocriſy and enthuſiaſm. Ought not theſe keen and cutting weapons to be ſnatched from ſuch hands, and their formidable artillery turned againſt themſelves?—Surely it is not impoſſible to convey wholeſome inſtructions in a vein of pleaſantry, and impart uſeful hints, or grave rebukes, with a ſmile.

——*Ridentem dicere verum,*
Quid vetat?

And many there are who will be much ſooner laughed out of their follies, than ſermoniſed, or reaſoned out of them.

The kind of verſe he has choſen, though it may appear harſh or puerile to ſome, ſeems peculiarly

adapted

adapted to this ſpecies of writing, carrying in it the ſound and air of burleſque; and ſome of the firſt and moſt approved writers have frequently uſed it; as *Swift*, *Prior*, *Gay*; to ſay nothing of the humorous, but ill-principled *Butler*.—But with regard to the ſucceſs of this little piece of extravagance, or the entertainment it may meet with from critics, he is not at all ſolicitous. He profeſſes not to write by ſtudied rule; and poetry is far from being his buſineſs.

A *Key* and *Notes* might have been ſubjoined, for the ſake of the unlearned Reader: But this he has thought proper to defer, till he may be diſpoſed again to take the pen, and in ſome future Cantos exhibit a larger picture of our celebrated *Golden Age*, for the benefit of poſterity; and to reſcue ſome other glorious names from oblivion. But for the accompliſhment of all this, he apprehends, he will have more than ſufficient time, if we may judge of the future by the preſent, before any material change of manners, principles or meaſures, ſhall take place to rob him of his game. The age ſeems to have very little biaſs or tendency that way; at leaſt they appear to be in no great haſte about it. He may only add, that he will not be extremely ſorry to find himſelf in this manner prevented, and all his paſtime ſpoiled.

THE

THE KIRKIAD; OR, GOLDEN AGE.

CANTO I.

THE age, I ſing, of taſte refin'd,
In which the free and lib'ral mind
Leaps o'er the bounds by bigots ſet,
And breaks from prejudice's net:
When arts and ſciences are found
Tranſplanted into holy ground,
And our forefathers worn-out creed
Before them lowly bows the head:
When Faith to Reaſon muſt reſign,
As handmaid to the ſov'reign Queen:

When laity and clergy vie,
Which ſhall go foremoſt in the way
Of happy, peaceful moderation,
To perfect modern reformation:
Not ſuch as when the wights of old,
Unaw'd by force, unbrib'd by gold,
Together leagu'd, both lord and clown,
To pull the harlot's trump'ry down:
When Monks and Friars, with hearts aching,
With their maſs-books were ſent a-packing:
When croſſes, altars were diſplac'd,
And ſaintly images defac'd:
Unhallow'd zeal! tho' now abated;
In cooler days how much regreted!
That did nor Kirks, nor Kirkmen ſpare;
Hence ever ſince they have been bare.
But lo! the wiſh'd-for day doth dawn,
When Kirkmen, yet array'd in lawn,
Shall pompous reign in lordly ſtate,
On velvet ſit, and eat on plate.

O come, thou *Genius* of the times,
Breathe thro' thoſe *Hudibraſtic* rhimes!
As in th' immortal *Characteriſtics*,
Thou op'd the depths of *Church-politics*,
And ſet before our riſing youth
The road to benefice and truth:

Inſpire and guide the Muſe's ſtrain,
That ſhe no ear polite may pain:
From dullneſs' ſtagnate deeps far bear her,
And wide of *Orthodoxy* ſteer her,
As far as *Humbo* in his ſpeeches,
Or Doctor *Winter* when he preaches;
For when upon theſe coaſts we hit,
We loſe all taſte, and ſpoil the wit.

O for a little of the ſpirit
Which *Demogorgon* doth inherit!
Who in th' *A——y-h—ſe* preſides,
And with bold hand the reins ſtill guides;
Who ſits, and ſmiles, ſecure at eaſe,
As tumults, ſtorms, and mobs increaſe;
Who ſees with fond parental eyes
A num'rous tribe of ſons ariſe,
To trace his footſteps o'er again,
And finiſh what the ſire began.

Hail, happy, bleſt, improved times!
Above the praiſe of jingling rhimes:
The ſhades of ignorance are flown,
And a new æra is begun.
Now ſcience, from point vertical,
Her perpendic'lar beam lets fall;

Now

Now owls and bats, and ev'ry creature
To gloomy night ally'd by nature,
From the ſtrong blaze to corners creep,
And from their holes dare ſcarcely peep.
And hail, ye ſeats of lit'rature!
Where *Scotia*'s famous youths mature.
Ye fountains! whence the ſtreams do flow
That fructify the vales below;
From whence their *gout* and virtues riſe,
And fine ſalubrious qualities.
As from the mineral wells of *Spa*
They ſtrong medic'nal waters draw;
And ſend far off to *France* or *Spain*,
Which ſtill *Spa*-qualities retain:
So each eccleſiaſtic rill
Preſerves the taſte of fountain ſtill.
They to all points of compaſs ſcatter,
Yet ſmell and taſte of *Alma Mater*;
However far they run and trot
To diſtant *Air*, or *John-o'-Groat*;
Thro' whate'er channel, mud, or gravel,
Or clay, or moſs, they chance to travel;
Whether they doſe thro' *Lowland* fens,
Or ſkip and trip thro' *Highland* glens;
Whether they waſh the richer *Merſe*,
Clydeſdale, *Lothian*, or the *Carſe*

Of

Of Gowry, or the barer *Kyle*,
Roſs, or the *ſhire* yclep'd *Argyle*:
However oft they change directions,
With wayward turns and circumflexions
(As oft you've ſeen a ſhallow brook,
Which from ſome ſterile mountain took
Its riſe at firſt, ſometimes incline
Now eaſt, now weſt, in ſerpent line,
Take ſome low villa in its courſe,
From motion ſtill acquiring force;
Then all at once come rapid down,
And pour into ſome wealthy town):
Yet after all theſe changes paſt,
They keep the tincture to the laſt.
Ye famous ſeats of ancient name!
Rivals to *Iſis*, and to *Cam!*
To you the muſe her tribute brings;
Where muck-born inſects firſt breed wings.

'Tis education forms the mind:
As eaſily the twig's inclin'd
To eaſt or weſt, or north or ſouth,
So bends the pliant oſier youth.
So long as taſte and lib'ral knowledge
Maintain their empire at the college,
No fear improvements will decay,
But make new progreſs ev'ry day.

From thence each year a nobler crop
Their pigmy fathers will o'er-top;
As far as we do ours outſtrip,
Our finger thicker than their hip.

When once the lad ſprings to his teens,
Amid the circle of his friends,
His parents fond hold conſultation
About his future occupation.
Some name the honeſt farmer's life;
But this is caſt by the good-wife;
" He is too gentle for the plough,
" And born to better bread, I trow."
Some name *St John*'s or *Criſpin*'s trade;
But *Mam'* would rather he were dead;
" He ne'er lov'd working to this hour,
" And hardy labour can't endure."
A merchant then—" But I ſuſpect
" He will his buſineſs neglect."
A lawyer's or a captain's poſt.
" 'Tis true; but that belongs to coſt!"
A parſon then he muſt be made:
Preaching's become a thriving trade!
Some awls and anvils have forſaken,
And to this work themſelves betaken,

In

In proſpect of more eaſe, or gain,
Enter'd apprentices again.
Mamma, with ſmile of approbation,
" Thinks this will ſuit his inclination;
" I hope the boy will come good ſpeed,
" Tho' he can neither write nor read.
" He is a youth of pregnant parts,
" And muſt be dubb'd *M—ſt—r of A—ts.*
" To ſome fat benefice he'll riſe;
" For genius ſparkles in his eyes.
" So much I clearly could divine,
" Altho' he was no child of mine."
Then *Tim* is of coarſe doublet ſtript,
And for academy equipt;
Where many novelties he ſpies,
And in one month grows mighty wiſe.
Begins to make a leg and bow,
No common vulgar Being now.
Pierian heights he climbs in haſte,
Of learning's ſtores at once poſſeſt.
When the firſt principles diſcloſe,
He thinks all *knowables* he knows:
So when the infant eye ſurveys
Small portion of the earth and ſkies,
He fancies his contracted ſight
Takes in the univerſe outright.

As when the circling, wand'ring ſun
Thro' all the ſigns his courſe hath run,
When he the zodiac travels o'er,
He is but where he was before:
So ev'ry dunce, who goes to ſchool,
Returns juſt what he went—a fool!
But one more finiſh'd and complete,
Brimful of emptineſs and prate.
O hapleſs is the fellow's lot
Who is oblig'd to hear his rot!
Sure *Horace* at his talk had died!
'Tis a hard queſtion to decide,
Whether 'tis better to endure
A bawling beggar at the door,
Or hear a ſcore of goſſips prattle,
Or a fine lady's table-tattle,
Or hear a youthful poet rehearſe
His juvenile eſſays in verſe?
Whether 'tis eaſier to ſit ſtill,
And let a vixen ſcold her fill,
Or to an unfledg'd pedant liſten,
When on his fav'rite themes inſiſting?

Forgive me, venerable ſages!
Who pump the wells of antient ages:
Whoſe flowing black gowns ſweep the ground:
I bow with reverence profound.

Let

Let not your Wiſdoms be offended;
No harm to you is here intended.
Altho' a fellow prove a num-ſkull,
It will not follow you are dull:
Tho' ten times leſs a dunce he came
Than when he goes,—are you to blame?
Have you not taken a long hour
To tell a little accent's pow'r?
Conſum'd the tedious winter night,
In ſetting Εν and Επι right?
Oft *Priſcian*, and *Varro* quoted
To clear up phraſes antiquated?
And dunn'd them ev'ry morn and night
With *Plato*, and the *Stagyrite?*
Or whetted up their *moral ſenſe*,
Sympathy, or *benevolence*,
To graft morality upon;
Altho' perchance it has not grown?
Declaim'd of *harmony* and *beauty;*
Or from *ſelf-love* deduc'd each duty?
How oft have you deſcanted on
The true *ſublime*, the Το πραπων?
And ſhewn that ev'ry man poſſeſs'd
The ſeeds of virtue in his breaſt?
Had pow'rs inlaid into his nature
To make a perfect happy creature;

Altho' they may contract ſome ruſt
By lying for a while unus'd?
Have you not oft, t'enlarge the mind,
Prov'd Pagans wiſe, and Chriſtians blind?
Found nature in no part deficient,
And made Dame Reaſon all ſufficient?
Philoſophy is all in all;
What need for *Moſes*, or *St Paul*?
More noble ſentiments who can
Adduce to make a man a man;
To chaſe the miſt from purblind eyes,
And force even dullneſs to be wiſe!
Can ſuch inſtructions ever fail
With pleaſure on the ſoul to ſteal,
And call the pow'r of virtue forth,
And ſtifle ev'ry vice in birth?

Young *Florio* hears the flatt'ring lecture,
Charm'd with the beauty of the picture;
Believes himſelf a demi-god;
Reveres great virtue's awful nod;
Feels ev'ry paſſion huſh'd within,
And virtue's empire now begin.
But *Florio*, at the cloſe of day,
To his *Pulcheria* ſlips away,
Th' experimental part to prove,
And hear a lecture upon love.

Philoſophy

Philoſophy is ſtale and dry,
When there is ne'er a miſtreſs nigh;
None could endure ſuch barren ſtudies,
Without ſome little chat with Ladies.
At once the Stoic's wiſdom's gone;
His ſoul obeys love's law alone:
Begins with *Brutus* to exclaim,
" *Virtue, thou art an empty name!*
" 'Tis nature points me to delight;
" What nature bids muſt ſure be right."
Virtue no more his boſom warms,
Pulcheria has far ſweeter charms.
He ſwears it is the higheſt bliſs
Of man, a pretty g—l to k—ſs:
This *Floria* thinks nor ſin, nor ſhame;
His D***r, quietly, does the ſame.

But ſtop, my Muſe! where do you run?
Pray let philoſophers alone.
Why thus preſume their lives to ſcan?
They muſt not live as other men.
Should men of elevated mind
Be ham-ſtrung, bounded and confin'd;
Or kept to virtue's narrow rules,
Among the herd of vulgar fools?
Free from the drudgery of *doing*;
Their bus'neſs only lies in *knowing*.

What

What genius ever did excell
In the trite art of living well?
The blazing comets always love
In an eccentric orb to move.
Great *Socrates* himſelf is blam'd
With ſomething that ſha'n't here be nam'd;
And he whoſe *ipſe dixit* ſway'd
The ſchools, like impulſes obey'd.
Plato divine, if not bely'd,
Such paſtime ſometimes took *aſide*.
And he who leads the Stoics' van,
In this way prov'd himſelf a *man*.
The tow'ring head with clouds begirt,
Yet leaves the feet to tread in dirt;
So he of old who had his eyes
Intent upon the lofty ſkies,
Was by his lower parts miſled,
And into a deep ditch betray'd.

When men of genius make deflection,
It is a ſign of their perfection.
To noble ſouls he recommends
Himſelf, who daringly offends:
Glorious the faults of ſuch appear;
Great crimes make a great character.

But who is he who next appears?
Who fair white band and black coat wears?
What is his name, or occupation?
From what outlandiſh clime or nation,
Has crept this ſtrange amphibious creature,
To whom no likeneſs is in nature?
Part of the ape, and part of man;
Half Pagan, and half Chriſtian:
'Twould puzzle even the great *Linneus*,
To tell his proper claſs and genus.
The golden mean, as poets ſing,
Should be preferr'd in every thing.
But when life's ſtormy ſea fools ride,
With hoiſted ſail, 'fore wind and tide,
No medium at all they know,
But mount too high, or ſink too low:
To right and left alternate run,
Still ſhifting like the varying moon:
Far from their latitude are blown
To frigid or to torrid zone:
Shunning one rock, they hit another,
Charibdis, or Charibdis' brother.
'Gainſt time and mode's impetuous force,
Who can ſteer on with ſteady courſe?
Should quondam prieſt ſtart from the dark,
Would he now know a brother—clerk?

Time

Time was when holy men had ſack-
Cloth, to ſcrub their meagre back;
When their penurious, hollow looks,
Were muſty as their worm-eat books;
Debarr'd from mutton, pork, and veal,
Their higheſt cheer was cakes and ale:
Claret or port they never guzzl'd;
Their beards uncut, their locks unfrizzl'd:
When ſilks, and feather-beds, and linens,
Were an infringement of the Canons:
When all the choſen recreation
Was flogging, and ſelf-maceration;
When outward man did daily penance,
By vigils, faſts, and eke abſtinence:
When the hard boards, and harder ſtones,
Were worn out by their marrow bones:
Their ſkin like parchment, or like vellum;
Their bones ſo bare that one might tell 'em,
If any time they walk'd the ſtreet,
The boys would run, and cry, *A ſp'rite!*
The ghaſtly figure of a parſon
Each woman would have turn'd her a—e on:
As ſome Egyptian ſhrivell'd mummy,
From niche or cavern black and gloomy,
Where it four thouſand years had ſlept,
To broad day-light again had crept.

But

But, wiſer we! our men in black
Their ſhare of this life's comforts take;
In caſe, perchance, the next miſgive,
They ſtudy, while they live, to *live*:
Nor ever chuſe to take a trial
In the rough ſchool of ſelf-denial;
Which hath but uſeleſs monks produc'd,
In monkiſh times firſt introduc'd
By ſome recluſe, who knew no better;
Some enemy to human nature.
A pretty doctrine, 'tis, forſooth!
That clergymen ſhould have no tooth!
This ſelf-denial, far too hard,
From preſent ſyſtem is debarr'd.
Humility is but a baſtard,
Fit only for a ſoul that's daſtard;
And *meekneſs*, tho' it once might paſs
For virtue, makes a man an *aſs*;
Lays ſaddle with a ſtirrup on
For every rogue to mount up—on,
As for the thing we call *devotion*,
'Tis an enthuſiaſtic notion.
Leſt this at any time intrude,
'Tis early nipped in the bud.
No ſprout of this deteſted weed
Henceforth we will have cauſe to dread;

A plague than hereſy far worſe,
Of the laſt age the greateſt curſe;
That Britiſh gallantry laid waſte:
But thank our ſtars! theſe days are paſt.
How ſoon might *Oxford* been o'er-run,
And with fanaticiſm o'er-grown,
Had not her heads, with timely care,
Check'd pſalms, and hymns, and prayers there?
Her famous houſes would have been
The ſeat of *Knipperdolings* ſeen;
Had not the riſing peſt been quell'd,
And the infected youths *expell'd*.
We need no purging of this ſort,
Becauſe there's no occaſion for't.

Obſerve that youth, upon whoſe cheek
Sits roſy health, ſo fat and ſleek;
His dreſs ſo trim, ſo gay his air;
So jolly, ſpruce, and debonnair;
You'd ſwear he were a ſon of *Galen*,
(Perhaps he did miſtake his calling);
He makes no ſour or whining faces,
Waſtes not the time in pray'rs and graces:
But ev'ry thing is neatly done,
Quite *a-la-mode*, and in *bon ton*;
Such as ſome famous *Sh—d—n* preaches,
Or play'r, or dancingmaſter teaches.

Nothing

Nothing e'er gives him ſo much fear,
As leſt he ſhould a ſaint appear;
Altho', ſuch is his happy lot,
This name he never yet has got.
To keep far off the imputation,
He has gone thro' a ſa—vat—n;
Is proud ſometimes to be detected
At *tete-a-tete* in place ſuſpected.
It is his higheſt aim and boaſt
To know each celebrated toaſt.
Double entendres he has ready
At fingers ends, to pleaſe a lady.
He learns from ge'men of the ſword
To grace his ſpeech with *Jove* or *L—d*;
Thinks that a cold and aukward truth
That wants the ſanction of an oath.
He loves to hear the whiſper ſpread,
That he inclines to ſceptic ſide;
Doubts of the odds 'twixt good and evil,
Believes no h****n, h*ll, or d***l.
This reputation will ſecure,
And make his future fortune ſure.

In lieu of matins in a morning,
His pretty perſon he's adorning:
Patient he ſits, while Maſter *Puff*,
With pomate, tongs, and powder-pluff,

Performs th' important operation,
And gives each hair its proper ſtation.
Like charming *Celia* at her toilette,
" How do I look?—Pray do not ſpoil it."

This theologue of modern breeding
Ne'er hurts his eyes or taſte by reading;
Throws by the works of rev'rend ſages,
For *Pope*'s or *Ovid*'s gayer pages.
By midnight lamps he hates to pore,
As dull divines in days of yore:
Whoſe books and ſermons without number
Are uſeleſs antiquated lumber.
Ye gloomy tribe of commentators,
Fathers and Centuriators,
Begone! no room for you to ſpare;
Give place to *Triſtram* and *Voltaire!*
For Bible he finds little uſe;
For too much ſcripture's an abuſe,
That flattens any compoſition,
And argues want of erudition:
Tho' here ſometimes he caſts a glance,
As on a *Homer* or *Romance*,
To ſcan it by the rules of *Pope*,
And glean a moral or a trope;
But ſayings he finds more divine
In *Arrian* or *Antonine*.

Can furniſh texts more *a-propos*
From *Seneca*, or *Cicero*;
To ſtand full proof againſt attacks,
Each ſentiment he ſtrongly backs,
By high authority of *Plato*,
Or pow'rful ſounding lines from *Cato*.

As for the work of ſermon-making,
He thinks it is not worth pains taking:
He finds his thoughts much freer flow
In writing of a *Billet-doux*.
In foreign aid is all his truſt,
If venture on the taſk he muſt.
Why ſhould young blades their ſpirits ſpend
In this hard labour?—For what end?
When there are plenty at command,
Well manufactur'd to their hand?
Great *Tillotſon*, if they can read,
Can give a lift in time of need;
The friend of clergymen diſtreſt,
As thou *Macquirk* can well atteſt.

Upon a day, the tale is told
(The tale is true, and not yet old;
As for the place, no matter where),
This ſprightly youth, of parts and fire,

His

His friend *Avaro* once aſſiſting,
Muſt go hold forth; there's no reſiſting.—
The people came, the bells did chime,
The clock announc'd the hated time:
But whether on the day preceeding
He had been on news-papers reading;
Whether a-poaching he had ſtray'd,
Or at the bowling-green had ſtay'd;
Or charm'd with violin or ſong;
Or at back-gammon ſat too long:
Whether the punch-bowl made him muddy;
Or tooth-ach pains had hinder'd ſtudy:
Whether his patron kind did treat him,
Or if the God of ſleep did cheat him;
Or whether his homily had been ſtole,
Or had ſlipt thro' his pocket hole,
Is not ſo clear:—But ſad miſhap!
Macquirk had not a ſingle ſcrap.
In this dilemma, tho' another
Would have been puzzl'd, yet this brother,
Who ne'er was put unto a *non-*
Plus, inſtant ways and means falls on.
He at no time chus'd to depend
On what kind heaven might pleaſe to ſend.
Preaching he could not underſtand,
When one has not his ſtock in hand.

He ne'er did mount the roſtrum yet
Without all ſure in black and white.
For papers by him ever were
Deem'd needful to a pulpiteer,
As knapſack to the travelling ſoldier,
Or ſecond huſband to young dow'ger;
Or bell and clock unto the ſteeple;
Or as the crutch unto the cripple.
Nor would he ſtoop to whine and pray,
But takes he thought the ſurer way.
To the book-caſe he ſtraight applies,
Where his friend *Tillotſon* he ſpies.
Good humour brighten'd on his brow,
As from the ſhelf the charm he drew.
No time to ſpare—he marks the place,
And march'd away with ſtately grace:
Then having ſaid, for form, the pray'r,
Which was the common for that year,
Pull'd the fair volume out, and read:
Some laugh'd, ſome ſtar'd, and bigots fled;
Some ſaid his ſermon did excell,
He ne'er before had done ſo well.

O *Tillotſon!* illuſtrious name!
Can I forbear to ſing thy fame?
Dear *Tillotſon*! ſoft reſt thy head!
Great pattern of the preaching trade!

Of preachers, long, and ſtill confeſt
By far the ableſt, and the beſt!
Thy works ſhall live to lateſt time,
While parſons preach and poets rhime.
Tho' to this hour ſo thumb'd and toſs'd,
Yet nothing of their luſtre's loſt.
Thy living works, when thou art dead,
Help clergymen to earn their bread.
How many daily call thee bleſt,
Who by thy labours do ſubſiſt!
No *Works* more charitable ſure
E'er *follow'd* mortal man before.
If charity befriend the dead
(As in thy flowing page we read),
And ope the gates of *Paradiſe*,
There thou mayſt boldly claim a place.

O æra fam'd of *Pr—byt—ry!*
In which we all diſtinctions bury:
When names and notions live no more,
Which were partition-walls before:
When *old true blue* with *ſurplice* meets,
And *Kirk* the high *Cathedral* greets:
The *Janſeniſt* and *Jeſuit*,
In our free climate well unite;
The deadly feuds are huſh'd to peace,
'Twixt patrons of *free-will* and *grace*.

Stern *Calvin* now is ſeen to ſtand,
Join'd with *Socinus*, hand in hand.
In glew of charity they ſtick,
Who erſt were wont to cuff and kick.
Tied with the ſilken cord of love,
The vulture neſtles with the dove.
The timid lamb the rough bear kiſſes;
Serpents forego their ſtings and hiſſes.
Now calves no more the lions dread,
But in one paſture love to feed.
The little child without affray
~~With~~ aſps and baſiliſks can play.
The miracle's each day renew'd,
Which wond'ring infidels once view'd,
When viper faſten'd on *Paul's* arm,
While by the bite he felt no harm.

Divines ſet free from party views,
Of ev'ry ſort may pick and chuſe:
All kinds of grain at once may knead
Into their batch, and make good bread.
Believe, and preach too what they pleaſe,
Nor run the riſk of loſing fees.
Familiar with a mitr'd Prelate,
As with a covenanting zealot.
May ſteer in *C——k*'s, or *Wh—t—n*'s road,
Or tread the ſteps which *T—yl—r* trod.

They

They need not pare a bold expreſſion,
To make it hang with the *C-nf-ſſi-n*,
Which ev'ry novice knows is now
But like a ſupple broken bow:
Altho' the times as yet run ſo
That none to benefice can go,
But thro' this little prickly wicket;
(Since it muſt be, e'en boldly take it).
But ſoon this relick of our ſlav'ry,
Support of prieſtcraft and of knav'ry,
Which has maintain'd too long its ſtation,
In this enlightened age and nation,
Shall root and branch be ſhov'd away
As ſoon as decently it may.

What mighty fools our fathers were
To raiſe ſuch hubbub, din and war,
And laviſh out their blood and treaſure,
Zealous for forms above all meaſure!
To put themſelves to ſo much pains
To forge their fetters and their chains!
To frame *C-nf-ſſi-n* and *D—ſt—ry*,
To gall the necks of the refractory.
Their form too of *K—k G-v-nm——t*
Thro' the three kingdoms muſt be ſent!
What beauty could theſe bigots ſee,
In their fam'd uniformity;

When

When Nature's works throughout declare,
Variety conſtitutes *the fair?*
Such puritanic days departed,
We've got their ſyſtem quite inverted:
To ev'ry faith indulgent be,
Zealous for *Multiformity.*
Howe'er religions jar no matter;
The more they vary, ſtill the better:
So ſtrains of muſic are more ſweet,
When hautboys, pipes, and fiddles meet:
Some high, ſome low; ſome hard, ſome ſhrill;
The ear of taſte with rapture fill:
The mixed ſtrains make harmony,
And diſſonance is ſymphony.

The preſent good complexion'd age
No more religious wars will wage;
Send no more armies over *Tweed*
To root out the prelatic weed.
Our gen'rous ſouls care not a pin
'Bout what is out, or what is in.
As for the uſe of *Common Prayer*,
We only wiſh the way were clear.
With *Biſhoprics* expreſs diſlike,
By praying that we had the like:
Then clergymen might draw regard,
And genius hope for ſome reward.

For our republican conſtitution,
Without ſome future revolution,
For this hath no proviſion made,
But fairly knocks it on the head;
Hath turn'd the key upon ambition,
And laid it under inhibition.
That fellow has no ſoul who would
Be pleas'd to be obſcurely good:
Who would ſit late, and early riſe
For wiſdom, when ſo ſmall the prize?
What man would ſtrain each lith and limb
The heights of lit'rature to climb?
Write *Hiſtories* elaborate?
The art of *Agriculture* treat?
With *Epigoniads* engage;
Or dreſs a *Douglas* for the ſtage?
Or, by Perſpective's rules, lay down
A *plan* of *Play-houſe*, or *New-town?*
Or, by *Mechanic* laws, to ſhow
The right conſtruction of a *Plough;*
That it mayn't baulk the lab'rer's toil,
Except when curſt with *barren* ſoil?
Or who would toil t'acquire the art
Of acting a falſe *Prophet's* part?
In *'pocalyptical eſſays*,
Praiſe kings in *unprophetic* days?

When

When all muſt *go unto the pot*,
Themſelves, if not their works forgot;
Remaining to their lateſt hour,
With all their ſtock of learning, poor.
It muſt each hopeful bloſſom wither
To think that all muſt herd together.
The foremoſt *Crape* in firſt rate town,
Can't raiſe an inch 'bove plain *Maſs John*.
Ev'n *Demogorgon*, whoſe learn'd pate
Deſerves a mitre, or a hat,
To *Peter's* chair can get no nigher;
Like barren heath he ne'er grows higher.

As for the *Organ*'s ſolemn peal,
And chanting *Choirs*, we like them well;
As quite befitting holy place
To prediſpoſe the heart for grace.
They hoiſt a Chriſtian thro' the air
To heav'n, before he is aware;
And force the ſoul to be devout,
Whether a perſon will or not.
Altho' we cannot hope to reach,
All of a ſudden, to this pitch;
Till trade revive, and grow ſome better,
We wont be able to mend the matter.
Mean while, with pleaſure, every day,
We ſee ſome ſmall advance that way.

Our

Our muſic now, how much refin'd!
No more to drowſineſs inclin'd!
The long, the drawling, whining notes,
As cats for milk, or horſe for oats,
From ev'ry place polite are vaniſh'd;
And to Whig conventicles baniſh'd.
Nor do we hold with vocal now,
But try the inſtrumental too.
Till for the nobler *Organ* ripe,
We whiſtle Pſalms on a *pitch-pipe.*
Thanks to the learned body, who
Adventur'd the firſt note to blow!
Who reſolutely broke the ice,
In ſpite of folks that are too nice!
Not *Tubal Cain's*, or *Jubal's* name,
Shall longer ſhine in rolls of fame:
With honour yours ſhall be expreſt,
While *pitch-pipes* and *pitch-piping* laſt!

O how does *Moderation* ſhine
With fair and ever placid mien!
In ev'ry place, both near and far,
In pulpit, bench, and at the bar;
From barbers ſhops, and coblers ſtalls,
To camps, and courts, and college-halls!
She ſmiles, with ſoft and winning air,
Ev'n from the theologic chair;

There ſoftens ev'ry harſher feature,
And dictates nought but pure good-nature.
Of *Doctor Quidnunc* ev'ry lecture
Holds up to view the charming picture:
Thro' ev'ry ſentiment ſhe runs,
In courtly phraſe, or merry puns.
He ſhuns the orbit ſyſtematic,
For motions new, and quite erratic.
Syſtems, and ſyſtem-mongers, he
Thinks bear too hard on liberty.
Full many a *tome* of crabbed names,
He bids conſign unto the flames:
Old *Auſtin*, *Jerom*, *Tom Aquinas*,
Doctor Seraphicus et Subtilis.
Eke *Calvin*, with his *aid-de-camp*
Great *Turretine*, with *Pedro Van*—
(They liv'd in ſuch unpoliſh'd times,
How ſhall I couple them in rhimes?
Sure rough and rumbling words like thoſe,
Nature ne'er meant for ought but proſe)—
—*Maeſtricht*, *Leydeker*, and *Pictet*,
Wendelin, *Hornbeck*, *Mark*, *de Wit*,
Beze, *Zuingle*, *Martyr*, *Caraloſtade*,
Zanchy, *Urſin*, *Ecolampade*,
Pareus, and ſo forth of all ſuch;
German, *Genevan*, or dull *Dutch*.

At heretics he ſeldom ſnarls,
As thoſe who love ſtill to pick quarrels.
His thoughts with *L-mb-ck* will comport
To-day; the next with *Acts* of *Dort*.
For neither ſide his blood he'll warm;
Such trifling points can do no harm.
Of mongrel brood, nor one nor t'other,
A perfect linſey-woolſey brother.
No ſentiments he will impoſe,
But lets each one his liking chuſe.
He thinks it ſuits not with the chair
To tell with a dogmatic air,
What is the truth, or where it lies,
While 'tis a diſpute 'mong the wiſe.
To no more certainly he'll riſe,
Than—*this affirms*, and *that denies*.
He only wants the youths who hear him,
Inter ſylvas quærere verum,
With a true *academic* ſpirit,
To ſeek for truth, but ne'er come near it.
With indefatigable pains
He takes of evidence the grains,
And throws them in th' oppoſing ſcales
So nicely, that no ſide prevails;
But leaves the caſe in *ſtatu quo*,
Dangling in *Equilibrio*.

Or if the beam obliquely ſways,
In the *Probabile* it ſtays.

So, on dead canvaſs, you have ſeen
Two armies, drawn in battle-line,
Fight keen with murd'ring ſpear and gun,
While yet no execution's done.
Ne'er nearer, nor yet more aſunder,
They threaten big with harmleſs thunder;
While neither party will knock under.
In fire and ſmoke long time they play;
Yet none or fall or run away;
In rank and file they ſtill abide,
And victory falls to neither ſide.

Now rambling Muſe, pray tack about!
How widely you've miſta'en your rout!
To wander from the powder'd *Beau*,
That figur'd a ſhort while ago,
And his good *Doctor* to light on!
Was ſuch a blund'ring imp e'er known?
Such freedoms are beyond all bearing:
But Lady Muſe is dull of hearing;
And ſtill muſt talk againſt all reaſon;
Nor minds if hereſy, or treaſon,
Oft with her rider runs away,
And, headſtrong, will take her own way:

Like

Like all the ſex, who ne'er are ſtill,
Without a little of their will.

The youth, ſet free from pedagogue,
His thoughts on ſettlement agog,
Caſts longing eyes thro' all the nation,
In ſtate of painful expectation;
And brightens up his parts for action,
In hope to ſtrike ſome gainful *paction*.
Of *Glebes* and *Manſes* weighs the ſites;
And all attendant perquiſites:
Obſerves th' incumbent's ſtrength and years,
And marks what ſymptom yet appears,
Of an approaching quick demiſe;
When he ſhall graſp the vacant leaſe.
No champion pants ſo much for battle,
As he for death of the *black cattle*.
For nought he can ſo earneſt pray,
As that kind heav'n would take away
Each vet'ran ſervant to his reſt:
Love makes him think, and wiſh the beſt.

When coughs, and rheums, and many ake,
On parſon cruel inroads make;
And the old *Dad* but take to bed,
He holds him now as good as dead.

Now

Now nothing but a ſhadow ſtops,
And baulks him of his eager hopes.
He hovers round the lovely ſpot,
As flies around the honey-pot;
Purſues the game as hard as able;
Is frequent gueſt at *Patron*'s table.
With wit, and *Gaiete de Cœur*,
He ſtrives to make the *Bargain* ſure.
Or ſhould good friends drop in a word,
Tis ten to one he wins *my Lord*.
Or ſhould none of theſe arts prevail,
The laſt reſource can never fail:
It calls for no uncommon talents
To urge ſome *golden* arguments,
Whoſe weight the dulleſt can't reſiſt:
A ſot may *feel* them with his fiſt.
So *Jove*, when other arts were vain,
In ſhow'r of golden did *Danae* gain.

By promiſe fair, and fairer writs,
All things at laſt are ſet to rights.
But how the keen *Expectant* grieves
To hear the invalid yet lives!
Nay more, to give him greater pain,
The dotard takes his word again;
Appears once more quite freſh and hale,
And ſtill is likely to do well.

What ſon of patience but would fret,
To be beguiled at this rate?
Not *Socrates* was in worſe bread
When *P—ſs-p—t* pour'd upon his head.
He ſwears it is the Clergy's way,
Long time to live beyond their day:
When they ſhould go unto the d—ce,
They parley, and make up a truce.
" D——n! when will the old rogue wear out?
" What is the ling'ring dog about?
" All his coevals he outlives;
" Like cat he ſurely has nine lives."

Right noble *Patrons*! let me grace
My verſe by giving you a place;
From thoſe who rub upon the throne,
To petty Knight and Eſquire down.
Of you each tenant prieſt now holds;
Your ſhepherds elect for your folds.
Shreds of the *pow'r of the firſt beaſt*,
Serve to adorn your lofty creſt.
Above the ſaints of low degree,
You ſhine by right of pedigree:
Over the vulgar Chriſtian brood
Are paramount, by birth and blood.
A right you have, by antient charter,
Things ſpiritual to gift or barter.

A right deriv'd from days of old,
Oft as your acres bought and ſold,
To plant each vacant ſacred place:
Beſt judges of true gifts and grace?
As ſun-flow'rs to the warm rays bend,
So churchmen on your ſmiles depend.
In beams of favour well they thrive;
But in your frown how can they live?
You need but ſay to prieſt or groom,
Go, and they go; come, and they come.
You have, at once, the *Kirk's* conſent
Reſolv'd into your ſole *Content.*
Let reſty commons nill or will,
All vaſſals muſt be vaſſals ſtill.

Who aſks a howling grumbling pack,
What maſter they'll be pleas'd to take?
Who aſks the ſimple, bleating ſheep,
What herdſman muſt them tend and keep?
Or who will ſay, 'tis reaſonable,
That the dumb tenants of the ſtable
Muſt jointly give the man a *call*
Who rubs them down, and fills their ſtall?
It ſets poor folks right well to tell
What preacher pleas'd them ill or well!
Shall men in Bonnets, and coarſe tatters,
Pretend to wiſdom, like their betters?

Can e'er a man arrive at ſenſe,
Who does not rent a hundred pence?
Who can his Bible underſtand
Who ne'er poſſeſs'd one foot of land?
Can one in conſcience give a vote,
Who is himſelf not worth a groat?
Who can ſuch impudence allow
That beggars muſt be chuſers too?
Tho' *Scape-grace* cannot preach or pray,
What have plebeian ſouls to ſay?
Why ſhould they their inſtructors ſcorn,
Whether their food be chaff or corn?
Whether the well be clear or ſtink,
Let them no queſtions aſk, but drink.
For *good and all* themſelves commit,
To others' hands more wiſe and fit:
About ſalvation take no care,
Nor of damnation have a fear,
While pow'rful *Patrons* ſtand between,
And *Acts of Parliament*, for ſcreen.

What precious privileges wait
On him who wears a coronet!
How wond'rous does the man appear,
Who has ſome thouſand pounds a-year!
His will is ſacred as a law;
His life, and actions have no flaw.

He holds more ſenſe in *pericrane*,
Than thouſand heads all join'd in one.
That *black is white*, if he avers,
Yet who will ſay his *Honour* errs?
Infallibility has come
Wrapt up with *Patronage* from *Rome*;
With the gift of diſcerning ſpirits;
And judging, without trial, merits:
Leſt he ſometimes a *Bull* diſpenſe,
That might give *Holy See* offence.

He muſt be good, whoe'er is great;
A Chriſtian without debate:
Tho' Bible he mind no more than
The fab'lous tales of Alcoran:
Tho' *Hume*, *Rouſſeau*, and *Bolingbroke*,
Contain of all his faith the ſtock.
Tho' races, routes, and balls, and plays,
Make up his only holidays;
Tho' he go reeling oft to bed,
No prayers heard, nor ſcriptures read;
Tho' oaths with ev'ry word jump out,
Yet ſtill his *Honour's* right devout;
Tho' he in church-time read the News,
And with his bum ne'er wear the pews:
Yet ſuch as he in this good day,
Can make a pious *Elder-Lay*.

A ſparkling ring, and ſhining lace,
May ſerve well in default of grace.

With what true judgment and good ſenſe,
Do *Patrons* ſtill their gifts diſpenſe?
Tho' 'tis no eaſy taſk, indeed,
To fix the point, who ſhould ſucceed;
It oft becomes a nice affair
The different merits to compare.
So many well deſerve the ſtation,
From pow'rful, warm recommendation.
One is a ready hand for ſport;
Another has a friend at court;
The third's a penetrating wit;
The next is for all bus'neſs fit:
Till the accompliſh'd youth appears,
Who off the Palm in triumph bears.
Good qualities in him unite;
For ſo his num'rous friends all write—
" Endu'd with the politeſt knowledge;
" Who is not ſpoiled by the college:
" Has nought at all of the *Divine*,
" But form'd in company to ſhine;
" Takes no offence whate'er you ſay,
" But lets each man live his own way;
" 'Bout morals gives himſelf no trouble;
" And for your faith cares not a bubble.

" So

" So charitable, you will find
" Him to your ev'ry weakneſs blind;
" Will not fly rudely in your face;
" He's one who better knows his place:
" To all *good-humour'd vices* kind,
" Becauſe that way himſelf inclin'd:
" For briſk champaigne he has a taſte;
" And freely will toaſt to *the beſt*——
" Can break a jeſt on *Cant* and *Knox*,
" And ſneer at all the *Orthodox*.
" For him on Sundays you may ſend;
" At cards a willing hand he'll lend.
" He can ſpeak French, and ſing, and dance,
" As if he had been bred in *France*.
" Friend of the fair ſex, warm and ſteady,
" I know he much will pleaſe *my Lady*.
" He will obey your ev'ry nod;
" Divert her Grace when you're abroad;
" Or be companion to your ſon;
" No man can better aim a gun.
" Of fowl your *commons* he'll lay bare;
" And prove the death of ev'ry hare.
" Of *coney-hunting* he is fond,
" And good at fiſhing lake or pond:
" Is dext'rous at mounting and a-lighting;
" And knows the *Indian* way of fighting.

" His

" His learning, and great erudition,
" Are far beyond doubt, or ſuſpicion.—
" He's maſter of the *Ars amandi*,
" *Ars poetic'*, and friend *Shandy*:—
" Has all *Anacreon* by heart;
" And of *Lucretius* good part.
" Once an Oration he did file,
" In the true *Ciceronian* ſtile.—
" His *Sermons* no man yet did hear;
" But that is *neither here nor there.*
" His itch for *Sermons* is not ſtrong;
" If they are bad they wont be long.—
" His *popularity* ne'er fear;
" This evil he avoids with care."

My Lord, his own good taſte to ſhow,
Exclaims, " *Detur digniſſimo.*
" Excellent youth! rare character!
" He'll do the buſ'neſs to a hair!"

Thrice happy they, who can with eaſe
Hit on the lucky art to pleaſe!
The Muſe doth here congratulate
Their riſing fortune and good fate:
While ſhe muſt in few lines deplore,
The hapleſs lot of numbers more.

Some

Some yet there are of rigid mein,
Devour'd by piety and ſpleen;
Who have not learnt, with modiſh air,
To flatter, or gallant the fair;
Who ſtick preciſely to old notions,
And ſpend an hour at their devotions;
Prefer a ſermon to a glaſs,
And let no jeſt, or *bon mot* paſs;
Who are ſo rude, and ſo uncivil,
As ſend a ge'man to the d***l,
If he but make a little trip,
And into ſome ſmall failings ſlip.
They dreſs man's nature all in ſable;
For one good thought make him unable;
Teach, that good works can ſave no man,
Altho' he do the beſt he can;
And in their zeal, broad hints throw out
Of *Grace*, *Election*, and what not.
Error, and *vice*, and *evil times*,
Theſe whiners make their fav'rite themes.
Poor fools! how much you miſs your aim;
Whether you reach at bread or fame!
You may bawl on unto Doom's-day,
Unleſs you take another way.
Think not ſuch pious airs and prate
Will recommend you to the great!

Think not your cant, and groaning pray'rs,
Can ever charm a *Patron's* ears!
Go! change your liv'ry and turn quacks;
For you no Kirk or *ſtipend* vakes!
Or to new world, pleaſe hoiſt away;
This ſide the globe you need not ſtay.
New-Englanders, or thoſe of *Pen'*,
Perhaps may welcome you, good men!
Your caſe is deſperate, alas!
Unleſs you chuſe for *Whigs* to paſs;
Or *H—t—gdon* take you in pay;
Or good *Gl——chy* find a way,
To rear more chapels at her coſt,
And give you all a chaplain's poſt.

But *Pegaſus* here reſts his wing,
Tho' many a theme remains to ſing;
As how a hoary prieſt, of late,
Felt longings for a ſecond mate:
How he obtain'd in *legal* courſe,
From his firſt ſpouſe a fair divorce:
How the old impotent at laſt,
In courſe of *Law*, was buckl'd faſt,
To a young, ſprightly, buxom bride,
Per force the while held by his ſide:
How he his right to dower pled,
Tho' ſhe would never mount his bed:

How

How the *Legality* was prov'd;
What learned arguments were mov'd
In conclave: What fine ſpeeches made,
Both *pro* and *con*, on either ſide.—
How *Demogorgon*'s pow'r, of late,
Was tott'ring on the brink of fate:
How envious men had almoſt ſhuffl'd
Him from his ſeat; and how they ſcuffl'd;
What clubbing, intrigue, and caballing;
What tilting, ſkirmiſhing and mauling,
Took place, within doors and without;
And how his foes were put to rout:
How he was more afraid than hurt;
And how the danger turn'd to ſport.
—How *Democracy*, it was ſaid,
Deep ſchemes and dang'rous plots had laid,
And muſter'd forces with intent,
Ariſtocracy to ſupplant:
How far and near ſtrange rumours ſpread
Of chieftains, on the *People's* head,
Seen in full march, with glitt'ring arms;
And how they prov'd but falſe alarms.
How ev'ry man was pleas'd to ſee
Dominium, not *Domini*:
How none were arm'd, but with a beſom,
To whiſk away the dirt of *Sch—m*;

And, *en paſſant*, to lend a *lounder*
To thoſe who kept their betters under;
That they no more a foot might paddle,
But in their turn, upon the ſaddle,
Get grateful rubbings to their breech,
To cure their *fundamental* itch——
All theſe, with other matters deep,
We ſhall, at preſent, leave to ſleep.

F I N I S.

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